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(54) IMPROVEMENTS IN OR RELATING TO THE JOINING OF TEXTILE MATERIALS

(71)We, Thomas French & Sons (ELECTRICAL) LIMITED a British Company of Poynton Industrial Estate, Stockport, Cheshire, SK12 1NF, do hereby declare the 5 invention, for which we pray that a patent may be granted to us, and the method by which it is to be performed, to be particularly described in and by the following statement:

This invention concerns the joining of textile materials and in particular though not exclusively the joining of pieces of carpet material, or carpet underlay material, for convenience such materials will be re-

15 ferred to generically as "carpet pieces" For many years carpet pieces have been joined together by stitching. More recently it has become known to join carpet pieces together by the use of an adhesive coated 20 tape which is caused to adhere to the carpet pieces by applying heat and pressure. Carpet pieces may be joined together more rapidly using adhesive tape than by sewing but it is not always possible to obtain as 25 strong a joint as is desirable using such tape. It has also been proposed to produce and use a tape which is woven using thermoplastic yarn and electrical resistance wires so that when the tape is used the 30 thermoplastic yarn can be melted or plasticised by heat from the resistance wires when the latter are connected to a source of power. The carpet pieces can then be joined by applying pressure whilst the thermoplastic 35 material is in an adhesive condition. A tape woven with electrical resistance wires can be coated with a thermoplastic material so that again heating can be achieved by connecting the resistance wires to a source of

Tapes woven with resistance wires and thermoplastic yarn, or tapes woven with resistance wires and coated with thermoplastic material, when used have to have their 45 resistance wires joined to a power lead and unless all of the wires are so connected it is possible that the full adhesive capability of the thermoplastic material is not reached.

The object of the present invention is to provide a method of joining textile pieces, 50 particularly carpet pieces, which is relatively simple to carry out.

Thus according to the present invention the method of joining textile materials includes the steps of laying two pieces of 55 material to be joined in edge-to-edge abutting relationship, locating an extruded thermoplastic material strip having carbon black particles dispersed throughout its volume and usable as an electrically con- 60 ductive component of said strip on one side of the two pieces of material so that the strip overlaps the abutting edges of the pieces of material, connecting the strip to a source of electricity to cause current to pass 65 through the electrically conductive component thereof to raise the temperature of the strip thus to render the thermoplastic material adhesive, applying pressure to the pieces of material in the joint region to 70 bond the pieces to the strip, disconnecting the strip from the source of electricity and allowing the material of the strip to cool.

The invention will be described further, by way of example only, with reference to 75 one practical form thereof.

A strip material suitable for joining carpet pieces in edge-to-edge abutting relationship is in the form of an extrusion of about two inches in width and of a thick- 85 ness compatible with the flow characteristics of the thermoplastics material. The material of the strip is high density poly-ethylene throughout which is dispersed carbon black. The strip is thus electrically con- 85 ductive and thermoplastic.

To join together two pieces of carpet material the pieces are laid in edge-to-edge. abutting relationship and a strip of joining material is laid on the underside of the 90

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carpet pieces at the joint so that the joint lies approximately along the centre line of

the strip of joining material.

The strip extends over the whole length 5 of the joint and at one end it is connected to a power source. A switch, ammeter, and variable resistance are conveniently connected between the power source and the joining material. With the power switched 0 on the strip is heated and it will become

10 on the strip is heated and it will become plasticised. When this condition is reached pressure is applied to the carpet pieces and the plasticised material is pressed into the interstices of the woven base of the carpet

15 materials. The power is switched off and the material is allowed to cool at which time it is found that a strong joint is provided between the carpet pieces.

Whilst reference is made above to join-20 ing carpet pieces having a woven base the invention is not limited to this. For example, the material can be used for joining nonwoven materials, such as felt carpet underlay.

25 It should also be borne in mind that the thermoplastic strip may include a proportion of rubber dispersed throughout the

polyethylene.

Clearly materials other than carpets and 30 carpet underlays can be joined together using the material and the method referred to above.

WHAT WE CLAIM IS:—
1. The method of joining textile

materials including the steps of laying two 35 pieces of material to be joined in edge-toedge abutting relationship, locating an extruded thermoplastic material strip having carbon black particles dispersed throughout its volume and usable as an electrically 40 conductive component of said strip on one side of the two pieces of material so that the strip overlaps the abutting edges of the pieces of material, connecting the strip to a source of electricity to cause current to pass 45 through the electrically conductive component thereof to raise the temperature of the strip thus to render the thermoplastic material adhesive, applying pressure to the pieces of material in the joint region to 50 bond the pieces to the strip, disconnecting the strip from the source of electricity and allowing the material of the strip to cool.

2. The method of joining textile materials as claimed in claim 1 in which the strip of 55 thermoplastic material is joined to the source of electricity via a connection including a switch, an ammeter and a variable resistance.

3. The method of joining textile materials substantially as hereinbefore de- 60 scribed with reference to the foregoing description.

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